



**MINUTES OF THE  
MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
March 4, 2015**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting of the Maryland Transportation Commission was held on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, at 10:30AM in Suite 3 of the Harry Hughes Conference Center at the Maryland Department of Transportation.

**II. Roll Call**

The following Commissioners were present:

Chairman Sudhir Trivedi

William Cox Jr.

Carol Petzold

Charles Deegan

Michael Moore

Elmer Horsey

Makeda Scott

Gregory Snook

Mario VillaSanta

MDOT Staff Ian Beam

MDOT Staff Albert Engel

Chairman Sudhir Trivedi called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM. The minutes from the February meeting were not available, and would be

**III. Dedication Requests**

Mr. Beam presented a request that a portion of York Road near Hereford High School in Parkton be dedicated to two deceased Marines. He informed the Commission that there would be no presentation on behalf of the applicants, and that the State Highway Administration had not yet completed its review of the application so there was no further information available.

Commissioner Deegan moved that the application be tabled until all data was available.

Commissioner VillaSanta asked if the application was incomplete. Mr. Beam stated that it was complete and reiterated that SHA had not yet completed its review.

Chairman Trivedi then asked for a vote. Voting "aye" were all but Commissioner Petzold, who voted "nay." The Motion passed by a vote of 8-1.

**IV. Other Business**

Mr. Beam then briefed the Commissioners on H.B. 466, "State Highway Administration - Dedication of Structures - Gold Star Families (Hero's Highway Act)." He explained that the bill

would require SHA to establish a process to, upon request, designate State-owned bridges or structures to the families of Gold Star recipients. He further described two proposed amendments, one that would limit the process to Gold Star recipients for conflicts after the Grenada conflict, and another that would require the Maryland Department of Transportation rather than the State Highway Administration to establish the process.

Commissioner Cox asked if the Governor's administration had expressed a position on the bill. Mr. Beam answered that it had expressed an official position, but that it was concerned about the number of potential applicants. Commissioner Petzold asked how the Gold Star families would be honored under this bill. Mr. Beam responded that the bill would require SHA or MDOT to establish a process without specifying what that process would be.

Commissioner VillaSanta stated that this proposed designation was different than the existing dedication program because the Gold Star dedication would be to the family, not the service member. Mr. Beam affirmed that this was true. He then offered an example of this, saying that according to lines 7 and 8, it was unclear whether the bridge or structure would be dedicated to the family or the service member. He added that testimony during committee meetings had indicated that the bridges or structures would be named after the service member.

Commissioner Petzold then asked what, specifically, the families on whose behalf the bill was introduced wanted. Mr. Beam responded that the families wanted to dedicate a specific bridge, but apparently didn't know of, or want to go through the existing process for such dedications.

Commissioner Cox indicated that he thought that the Commission had set parameters under the original legislation to handle these kinds of requests. Mr. Beam responded that in response to this proposal, he had sent a copy of the dedication policy as well as a copy of the statute allowing naming of structures. Additionally, a letter of information explaining the existing process had been delivered to all members of the committee.

Commissioner Petzold asked about the corresponding Senate bill, and Mr. Beam answered that it was S.B. 802 and had been introduced by Senator Cassily of Harford County. He then brought up another point, telling the Commissioners that the Veterans of Foreign Wars had expressed financial support of some sort to back the signs. Commissioner VillaSanta asked what this meant. Mr. Beam responded that the VFW could pay for the signs, but MDOT would still need to fabricate and install them, as all signs for Maryland roads were made in the SHA sign shop to keep quality control high. Chairman Trivedi asked for further clarification, and Mr. Beam responded that a funding mechanism would still need to be found, but that developers and other had paid for signs in the past and that the signs could definitely be made in-house.

Commissioner Snook asked if the Commission could email the delegates personally known to Commissioners to remind them about the currently existing dedication process. Mr. Beam replied that he could follow up again with MDOT's Office of Policy and Government Affairs to determine the Department's stance on this. [NOTE: OPGA STATED THAT THE INFORMATION HAD BEEN ADEQUATELY DISTRIBUTED TO THE MEMEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS A RESULT OF THESE BILLS]

Commissioner Snook asked about other types of structures, saying that the Commission would run out of bridges quickly. Mr. Beam responded that "structures" would need to be defined, but that a larger issue would be that an excessive number of signs would create a safety issue. Chairman Trivedi suggested that State welcome centers would be an appropriate place for a centralized memorial. Commissioners Petzold and Moore then expressed their agreement with the idea of having one memorial, with Commissioner Petzold adding that there were existing

memorial plaques throughout the state. Mr. Beam stated that the bill's sponsor wanted a physical gold star on the signs, but that may not be in compliance with the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the guidelines from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. (AASHTO) Commissioner Moore then commented that the signs would likely not be visible anyway on a busy street.

Chairman Trivedi asked if there was any other business. Commissioner VillaSanta asked whether the Secretary had been confirmed. Commissioner Cox responded that he [the Secretary] had been affirmatively voted out of committee but not yet been confirmed.

Commissioner Petzold said that her vehicle registration had recently come due, and that she renewed it online after an email from the Motor Vehicles Administration. She stated that she subsequently received a hard-copy renewal notice as well as numerous third-party solicitations for extended warranties, and said that this was a waste of time. Commissioner VillaSanta asked if the two notices were for the same car, and Commissioner Petzold said that they were. She added that she wanted to know how the third-party companies had received her registration information.

Commissioner VillaSanta asked if the solicitations were coming from the dealership. Mr. Beam then commented that auto dealers sell their lists of sold vehicles to service companies. Commissioner Petzold then asked if Fitzgerald Toyota had put her on a list they had sold, and the consensus was that they had.

Mr. Beam then said that he didn't think anyone at MDOT could do anything in response to this question, but that he would forward the concern to the MVA. Chairman Trivedi added that she could also get in touch with the Consumer Protection Division.

Commissioner Petzold then commented that the number of contacts immediately after her registration renewal bothered her, and added that she wondered why the MVA bothered to send an email notice if they would send a hard-copy notice as well. Mr. Beam said that he would have the MVA get in touch. [NOTE: MVA WILL BRIEF COMMISSION; DATE TBD DUE TO SESSION CONSTRAINTS]

Chairman Trivedi then asked if there was any other business. Commissioner Scott asked about emails from the Department of Business and Economic Development about a \$4.5 billion dollar decrease in the Transportation Trust Fund. Commissioner Moore answered that this referred to the proposed elimination of automatic gas tax increases.

Commissioner Deegan then announced that this would be his last meeting, telling the other commissioners that the Governor had nominated him to be the chair the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Commission. The other commissioners thanked and congratulated him.

## **V. Adjournment**

Chairman Trivedi asked if there was any other business. Seeing none, he adjourned the meeting at 11:13 AM until April 1, 2015 at 10:30AM at MDOT HQ.